

Feb. - March 1986



Via Pacis Vol. 10 No. 1

“Making a path from things as they are  
to things as they should be”—Peter Maurin



# Affordable Utilities for Everyone

by Patti McKee

The month of December made us very glad that we had our utilities on and were able to keep our houses warm. (Thanks to our supporters!) But even with plastic on our windows, our heating bill for Lazarus House was \$540. That is the highest ever for any of our houses.

When paying our bill I thought of families living in other large houses in the neighborhood. The rent in these houses is usually cheaper than other places. But the houses are usually poorly insulated and the owners have little incentive to insulate them for renters. And the families on fixed or low incomes can't afford to do it themselves. Thus, the utility bills in the winter months maybe as much if not more than the rent. The cheaper rent does not seem such a bargain after a winter spent in these houses.

The state tried to help out people in these situations last winter by imposing a moratorium on winter shut-offs. The utility companies could not shut-off utilities, if the individual applied and qualified for energy assistance, between November 1st and April 1st. The moratorium turned out to be only a band-aid for a large gaping wound. It does not work for two reasons.

The first reason is the continuous rise in the cost of utilities. "According to the Iowa Energy Policy Council, the cost of electricity has increased an estimated 66.4% and the cost of gas an estimated 131% (in Des Moines) since 1979." (p. 30) While A.D.C. benefits (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) only increased 5.8% from 1980 to 1985, with a 23% loss in purchasing power since 1980. (p. 30) The utilities will continue to rise in cost.

The second reason the moratorium did not work was the unreasonable payment schedules set up by the utility companies for people to pay their back bills. People were given seven months or less in which to pay it all back. For people on fixed incomes it was almost impossible to do. As a result there was a drastic increase in the number of shut-offs in the months after the moratorium was lifted. The chart below compares the shut-offs of April 1984 before the moratorium was imposed and April 1985 after the moratorium.

	1984	1985	% increase
April	286	549	91
May	395	583	47.5
June	275	486	76

Even though the increase was due to a build-up from previous months, November through March, it put a more concentrated strain on services trying to help these people.

We encountered people who tried to deal with the shut-offs in various ways. Some people had their utilities reconnected in their children's names. If they got behind again in their bills, then their children would not be able to have utilities in the future unless they pay off that bill. The utility company also caught on to this strategy. They required people to prove who they were and required that they be 18 years old or older in order to have the utilities turned on.



Other people spent their summer cooking over charcoal grills and using candles for light. Sharon Baker of C.R.O.S.S. ministries said they started stocking their emergency food pantries with these items. In 1984, C.R.O.S.S. ministries saw about 18 families seeking aid or shelter due to utility shut-offs. In 1985, it increased to 129 families. (p. 27)

Two women who stayed with us tried to heat their homes with kerosene burners until it just became too cold for them to stay in their houses. Other people moved in with friends and relatives, our house or the family shelter. Other people gave up entirely on being able to pay off the bill and moved out of town.

The utility shut-offs also caused other problems for people. People's health was threatened, especially the elderly. It is considered child neglect to be without utilities, thus, people are afraid to go for assistance in fear of having their children taken away. Children's schooling is interrupted if people have to move to a shelter or another town.

"A survey conducted by the State of Iowa . . . determined that the cost of utilities ranked second only to unemployment as the leading cause of hunger." (p. 27) We see evidence of this by the increased number of people coming to us for food. People should not have to deal with these extra concerns imposed by the cost of utilities.

Several groups around the state of Iowa are concerned by the rising cost of utilities and the effects of the current moratorium law. These groups have come together to form C.A.B.E.L. (Coalition for Affordable Budget Energy Legislation). Our Catholic Worker Community is part of this coalition. The coalition is in the process of presenting the 12% Affordable Budget plan to the Iowa legislature as an alternative to the moratorium. We believe this plan will have a better long-term effect than the moratorium.

Basically, the 12% plan states that people who live at 150% or under of the federal poverty level only pay 12% of their monthly income for utilities from November 1st through March 31st. Then, the rest of the year, they pay 12% of their income or the utility bill which ever is higher. This way they pay back some or all of their bill left over from the winter months. An example, if your monthly income is \$300, you would pay \$36 per month toward your winter utility bills.

To certify for the plan, people just have to show proof of their income to the utility company and recertify every six months. People that are already shut off can be eligible for the plan by paying a reconnection fee and paying one-half of the past due bill, which can be paid by other agency assistance programs. Elderly and handicapped persons first subtract their medical expenses from their income before determining their eligibility for the plan.

The 12% payment will be divided between the gas and electricity bills, if both are used. The most used utility will receive 8% and the secondary will receive the other 4% of the payment.

This plan is not unique to Iowa, it is drawn up according to a law recently drawn up in Illinois. Ohio has a 15% plan passed by the Commerce Commission. Minnesota and Wisconsin have pilot projects of similar plans.

Cont on pg-10



# Announcements



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 24, 1986 Ralph McGehee, a former CIA officer will eat at the Catholic Worker at 6pm and will then speak at 8 pm at Hawthorne hill's dining hall. All are invited to the meal and the talk. If you need more information call Kari at the Worker-243-0765.

July 4-6, 1986

Heartland Peace Pilgrimage  
This is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy. For more information on how you can take part, write:

Heartland Peace Pilgrimage  
Sisters of Mercy  
1801 S. 72nd St.  
Omaha, NE 68124

## WITNESS FOR PEACE

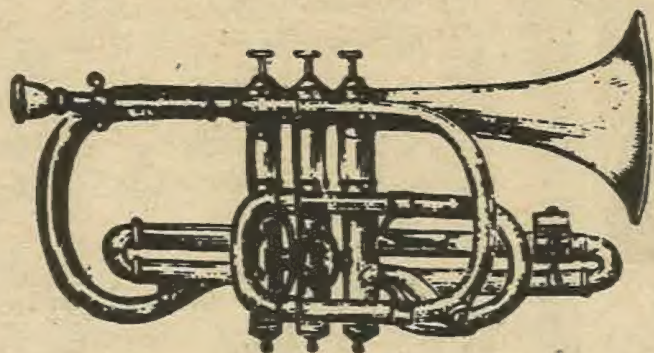
Dates June 7-21  
Cost: \$1,000-\$1,200

For applications and information write:

Karen Shortridge  
Box 31242  
Omaha, NE 68131

Witness for Peace is an organization that sends groups to Nicaragua to live and learn more about the situation in that country. Space is limited, so send for information now.

We have Mass every Friday night at 7:30. Come join us in our celebration! It's a great way to visit the Catholic Worker. Please stop by and visit our new house.



We at the Des Moines Catholic Worker encourage you to participate in:

FAITH AND RESISTANCE II  
April 3-5 in Warrensburg, MO.

For information, registration or questions, contact:

Faith and Resistance II  
3125 Chestnut  
Kansas City, MO 64128  
or call (816) 923-3662

The cost of the retreat is \$15. Meal tickets for Fri. lunch and supper and Sat. lunch are available at a cost of \$10-you must order a meal ticket when you register. Scholarships are available on request by March 15. Retreat and action will be centered around Whiteman AFB.

Contact above address and phone if interested.

VIA PACIS is published every two months by the Des Moines Catholic Worker, P.O. Box 4551, Des Moines, Iowa (50306). Telephone (515) 243-0765 or 243-7471. We maintain Lazarus Hospitality House, 1317 Eighth Street, a temporary shelter for women, couples, and families, and Monsignor Ligutti Library and Peace and Justice center, 1301 Eighth Street.

## Thank-you

A very large THANK-YOU is given to you, our readers. The response to our plea for help to fix the water was overwhelming!!! Our water is fixed!! Catholic Workers are now clean. We all have happy faces.

In appreciation, we will list only one need-the others are in previous issues and remain consistent-our one large need-that also remains consistent is:

## Needs

FOOD-HELP-we're all out!  
YOU NAME IT WE DON'T HAVE IT!!!  
We need canned goods, pasta, tomato paste and sauce, we need soup-we're wiped out of everything. HELP!!

THANK-YOU, the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community  
Oh yeah, we always need PRAYER

## COMMUNITY

Cindy Blake  
Luke Bobbitt  
Wendy Bobbitt  
Kari Fisher-we finally spelled it right.

Jim Harrington  
Donna Henderson  
Patti McKee  
Judith Reeh  
Norman Searah  
Carmen Trotta





# You can help from your living room

Many people seem to be very busy these days. Many of us claim that we don't have the time to take action on the important issues of our day, or we don't have time to reach out to another in need. Following are ways and addresses to reach to others from your own home. The only going outside you'll have to do is going out to buy stamps and going outside to mail the letters.

## TO WRITE SOMEONE IN PRISON:

Contact: Doug Maben  
Criminal Justice Ministries of Iowa  
1521 Sixth Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50314

or: Kenneth Thomas Sible  
Action for Justice  
Box 275  
Latrobe, PA 15650

## HOW TO HELP NEW ZEALAND!!!!

New Zealand has refused to allow nuclear armed warships to visit its ports and has refused to participate in the arms race!!! Now Congress is threatening sanctions. Please write to your Senators and Congress representatives to prevent this from happening. For more information on how to take more action:

Contact:  
New England Pacific Coalition  
11 Garden Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138



*it is in giving*

## CHARLES GRASSLEY DID A NICE THING:

so please send him a letter of support and continue to encourage him to favor the "DeConcini Bill" which will prevent the US from deporting El Salvadorans. Also, write and ask him not to vote to send aid to the contras that are attacking Nicaragua.

*that we receive*

## The Weight of Nothing

"Tell me the weight of a snowflake," a coal-mouse asked a wild dove.

"Nothing more than nothing," was the answer.

"In that case I must tell you a marvelous story," the coal-mouse said. "I sat on the branch of a fir, close to its trunk, when it began to snow, not heavily, not in a raging blizzard, no, just like in a dream, without any violence. Since I didn't have anything better to do, I counted the snowflakes settling on the twigs

and needles of my branch. Their number was exactly 3,741,952. When the next snowflake dropped onto the branch—nothing more than nothing, as you say—the branch broke off."

Having said that, the coal-mouse flew away.

The dove, since Noah's time an authority on the matter, thought about the story for a while and finally said to herself: "perhaps there is only one person's voice lacking for peace to come about in the world."

Reprinted from a mailing that we received from Catholic Peace Ministries.

## WRITTEN AND MONETARY SUPPORT FOR THE SANCTUARY MOVEMENT

"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall do him no wrong. The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Lev. 19:33-34

Please offer your prayers, your time, your money and your encouragement to the Sanctuary movement. They provide a much needed service to those refugees from Central America. Contact:

National Sanctuary Defense Fund  
c/o Franciscan Friars of California  
1610 Bush Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

or:

Franciscan Friars of California  
1500 34th Ave.  
Oakland, CA 94601



## BIG MOUNTAIN RELIEF PROJECT.


Briefly, this is where many Navajo and Hopi Indians have lived and the government is trying to force them off of their land so that they (the gov't) can use the land for its mineral resources. This is sacred land to the Indians. For more information about how you can help contact:

Big Mountain Support Group Office  
930 1/2 Iowa Ave.  
Iowa City, IA 52240  
or call: 319-337-4678

These individuals can also tell you who to write in Congress to try to stop this government action.



# From Mike Colonnese



We, here at the DMCW received a Christmas letter from Mike which we will not be printing. We are not printing it because we received the following poem from Mike. This poem is so indicative of the gentle, guiding, godly love that Mike has for the people of El Salvador and the rest of Central America. For me, I can almost feel the extent of Mike's pain and frustration and his joy as well. Following is the poem. I encourage you to write or send contributions to Mike for his work and also send encouragement. His address:

Senor Colonnese  
Apartado 360  
Centro  
62000 Cuernavaca, Morelos  
Mexico

## To My Unborn Grandchild: My Garden

My days are filled with sights of horror, human tragedy, pain.  
My heart aches like a bleeding sparrow, body pierced,  
And the spectre of war and destruction hovers over children  
like a dark storm cloud about to burst its fury  
on the soft grass and flowers' petals below.

Thunder roars and lightening cuts across the heavens.  
Within the human heart there is still hope  
as the rays of God's sun pierce the darkness of that sky  
and find their way to awaken life in my garden.

My garden! A place of peace because I have allowed  
no nuclear bombs to be stored there:  
no guns, no corvos, no rockets are allowed to desecrate  
this sanctuary of God's creative glory.  
No, the shapes and forms and colors burst out all over  
in a song of glory and a story of hope.  
My garden is my dream for humankind.

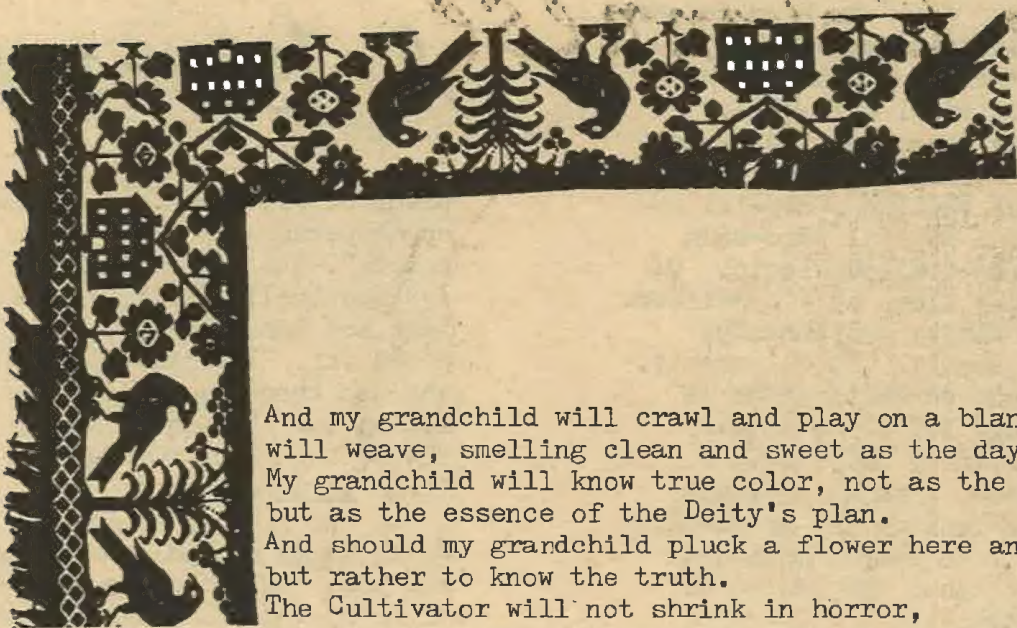
And my garden will be guarded, watched over  
like a jealous lion with its day's catch.  
My garden is for my grandchild who will ride to earth  
on a star of light and  
whom I will welcome into this world  
with a fist full of God's colors and aromas.

And I will plant and cultivate and love  
so that this sanctuary will be for my grandchild a place of safety, beauty and love,  
where this gift of God will come to know that the Creator's sun still burns  
with the anxiety of peace  
and yearns to send its rays of hope to penetrate humankind's ugly greed and unconcern  
for my garden and for grandchildren. In my garden  
this innocence will know God's plan of love.

My grandchild will know the green of rapid growth, the orange of show,  
the red of beauty, and the yellow of light petals  
to be tended with delicate touches.  
The thorns that protect the rose from intruders  
my grandchild will see as a weapon of preservation of peace and thus disdain  
the M-16's which are ruthlessly plucking life from loved ones  
and casting that life aside like uprooted weeds to wither.

My garden will be a place of peace because it is God's creation. It will be  
a place of quiet in which life can grow because there will be no debate about human life  
and no threat and no professional inadequacy to communicate the truth.  
In my garden my grandchild will be surrounded with honesty and virtue.  
The colors will be as God painted them; the shapes and forms as He molded them;  
the height and depth as this magnificent architect of the universe  
planned for all eternity.





And my grandchild will crawl and play on a blanket of greeness that nature will weave, smelling clean and sweet as the day's fresh wash.  
My grandchild will know true color, not as the reds of sweets and bolts of cloth, but as the essence of the Deity's plan.  
And should my grandchild pluck a flower here and there, it will not be to destroy but rather to know the truth.  
The Cultivator will not shrink in horror, because those flowers were made for my grandchild.  
The little one will investigate and satisfy curiosity's eye.  
And those shapes and forms and colors will not cry out in pain because they will rest in the tiny hands of innocence where they will find a home of love and gratitude.

My garden will be a place of hope, the hope of wise growth and tender heart where little ones will reach heights in truth and peace and wisdom.  
With their wide brooms of love, without prejudices, they will sweep clean the skies of menacing darkness and tug at the sun planet's rays to hug the earth in new warmth and comfort.  
And the death of ages past, my age, will be remembered without guilt in a new world of peace.  
The destruction of a generation past hidden in conscience clear for joy and happiness in a new garden of love.

This will commence in my garden of God's creative beauty now as all peace should begin. It will stir to life with simple color and form but my grandchild's brush will one day be placed beside the great masterpiece of lasting peace.  
That world will be aplace unknown to us, our greed, or rejection of the beauty of life, of human family ties.  
But my grandchild, with multicolored brothers and sisters, all singing different praises, but to One God, reflecting in their social thrust the colors of God's universe, each a thing of beauty, each a stroke of divine love and wisdom.

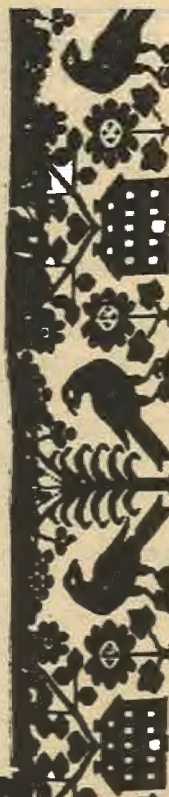
My prayer: Time, O Lord, to cultivate and tend this garden for my grandchild and a final word of hope from tired lips and sagging spirit.  
Yet, living under this ominous cloud of apprehension and fear  
(My prayers of thanksgiving):  
I have ealked for a while in the garden of peace and hope, clearing the brush and the debris.  
I have labored there, beloved grandchild, trying to straighten rows of colors and arranging ordered growth as God asked me. The plow becomes too heavy for my feeble hands, the fields too vast for my allotted days.  
A spark of life here and there but ruthless presidents and dictators have trampled my delicate blooms and cruelly yanked out roots of happiness yet to be born.

Yet, beloved grandchild, even they, with all their power and mortars, could not block out God's rays of hope.  
And in between the destruction caused by sinful humankind, those colors and aromas and shapes and forms protrude, pushing their way upward to reveal their task of love, as you, my beloved grandchild to those who search for truth and beauty.

Alas, do not be disappointed that some may have reached such heights of damnation that they cannot bend their stiffened backs to see the little sprouts, to see you, my grandchild, their almost hidden beauty yearning eagerly to grasp the sun's rays for life.  
But you, my grandchild, from a natural view, you will see it all and in your heart you will cry out in gratitude to the God who gives you all that is good and beautiful.

And my grandchild will learn a godly role, cultivator of peace, bearer of God's joy, envoy of love (I will teach my grandchild with God's gift of time).  
And this little one will cause colors to glow, aromas to inspire, shapes and forms ...all a chorus to their creator.  
And my grandchild(my prayer) will build with God's grace another garden for other grandchildren and (my prayer) in my memory place a white flower on my resting place which those little hands pluck from the garden of peace. My Eternal Garden.

L.M. Colonnese





"It is not allowed to give up." If I could read the silence of Jesus as he makes his dolorous way toward his execution, that is the look he turns on us. We are not allowed to give up. I read the look in spite of myself, I cannot understnad.

Not giving up; no great message for sophisticated Christians in an advanced culture. Everything, every ad, every political pronunciamento, every hype, flash-bulb, successful face (they are growing rarer), all assure us, we've made it. We have a better evangel than that, a more refined "spirituality", a gospel in tune with our intellects, our egos, our gross (sic) products; a gospel less abrasive, edgy, primitive.

Do not give up. Not much of a command. Nothing attractive, a negative, a burden, a pain. Hardly calculated to make a noise in the great world, or bring disciples or a cash-flow.

Still, given the time, given the nukes, given the waste of talents and brains in slavery to extinction, given the dying poor and the tottering social system, given Reagan-madness, given all this (and more to come) not such a bad gospel after all." Daniel Berrigan S.J.



I sit here, grudgingly entering upon the task of writing an article for the Via Pacis. Here, as in every other facet of this life, (community life, this attempt at something well-reasoned, responsible; faithful), I am struck by a sense of overwhelming futility. Like some daft Jew preaching salvation history in Dachau, so I've wasted my days. (My very language gives me away. I speak as though days or time, were capable of being "wasted", and thus, comparatively, capable of being well used. As though we humans were capable of making history after some image other than a weapon or a cemetery, -capable of creating a viable, sane human arrangement. Our best attempt, that glistening tower at Babel comes to mind. So well ordered... a perfect system of checks and balances; and efficient bureaucracy in which all needs were met, food, clothing, shelter in abundance and style; a lock-step culture; an effective judicial system in which criminals were duly and justly punished. Justice, of course, being arbitrarily set, but nonetheless, generally accepted, known and agreed upon, and so, "fair." It is to the Creators credit that s/he destroyed such a place, for neither love nor freedom could flourish there.)

Anyway, back to salvation history and Dachau. I can already here the murmurs of contention: Did not the Jews shortly thereafter regain the promised land?" To which I reply, "So what." Nothing has

changed. The Jews have become Israelis, (transplanted Americans funneling arms to the fascists in El Salvador), what has become of the Israelites? So, again, futility. I am not seeking a hopeful response, a hopeful word-sense no psycho-trained cleric. Of one thing alone am I convinced: my own sanity and honesty; dogged sanity; brutal honesty. If anyone cares to offer me anything, let it be this: join me in my mourning.

I need, I think to flash out the reasons for my despair. Allow me to simply enumerate some personal epiphanies of futility.

-Daniel Berrigan. This well-spring of living water here in the parched and barren spiritual wasteland of America might be a reason for hope if his church had followed him. Instead, nothing has changed, like the prophets of old he has been informally anathematized by powerbrokers of both church and state. Moreover, like the prophets of old he will be informally, if not formally canonized after his death. His message will be considered "timely", which is to say, relevant then but hardly applicable now.

-Likewise I think of Dorothy Day. I read recently, in some volume on Catholic social thought, a brief outline of her ments and message. The tenor of the epitaph was very clear: "Ms. Day's message informed and reformed the social consciousness of the Catholic church. It's present proper commitment to justice is due in large part to her prophetic voice." Once again, as if something had changed. Brutal honesty: nothing has changed-the church stands idly by as Central America is raped, tortured, burned and killed by the necromantic chief executive of this nation; the poor grow poorer, the rich-richer; budget cuts in all programs designed to alleviate the worst pangs of poverty, increases in military expenditures; farmers systematically displaced to be replaced by the corporate boys; growing economic disparity seen along racial lines etc., etc.

This exact same mechanism is at work with the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a man often called, simply, "nigger" during his lifetime. Two pictures featured in the Register were particularly telling in this regard. The first, taken in some all black classroom in South Carolina, featured some white, well dressed, government official (Pres. Reagan's Sec. of Education), preaching to the students about the merits of Kings lifetime. Notably a set of three black elders stood quietly in the background. The second picture, oh heartbreak, showed Vice-President Bush with his arm around Coretta Scott King. Yes, in both cases, white men paying homage to the image of Dr. King, (most probably giving thanks for it's dead silence). These, the very rich,

# A Litany of

powerful white men who act as spokespersons for the "new agenda".-the agenda that is systematically destroying every idea and ideal that Dr. King stood for. The same white men who are throwing affirmative action out the window while 50% of the black population lives in poverty.

-In the library at Ligutti House hangs a needle work picture and poem commemorating the deaths of four students killed by the National Guard for protesting against the war in Vietnam. The last line of the poem reads: "This need not be meaningless-but it will be." When I first laid eyes on this a few years ago I thought, "how despairing." Yet, infact, brutal honesty, for after ten years of shocked silence over an in-



sanely vicious play at power, our nation has come up with a mythical substitute for valid history, (brutal honesty), namely Rambo. Now, with the myth as a base, the revisionist historians have come to the fore. "The United States," it is said, "won every military battle it engaged in during the Vietnam police action. Unfortunately our nation lacked the resolve to stay the course." Moreover, Nixon and Kissinger have once again become viable political figures. Where, I ask, is memory; a sense of history that might temper naivete? Blood cries out from the Kent State soil unanswered.

Speaking of Vietnam, in Spanish this translates to El Salvador, or so says a not too popular bumper sticker. In fact, El Salvador is simply an instant replay of the former. As in Vietnam, the long recognized



# Thoughts

by Carmen Trotta

social injustices suffered by the vast majority of El Salvadorans have been transformed by the Reagan administration into a Soviet/Cuban/communist ruse. As in Vietnam the limits placed on the number of American military advisors (55) has been routinely ignored and circumvented (as of 1984, over 100 were on duty at any given time). As with Vietnam, carpet bombing and the indiscriminate killing of civilians has been routine, a matter of strategy. As with Vietnam, ~~the~~ palm and white phosphorous have been supplied by, you know who, and used. As with Vietnam, a 'strategic hamlets' policy has been attempted and failed miserably (in San Vincente). As with Vietnam, the 'land to the tiller' agrarian reform facade has been tried-again failure. As with Vietnam, the United States has managed



to prop up the facade of free elections to give credibility to the powerless and unpopular Jose Napoleon Duarte. (A man educated and honored at that bastion of American Catholicism, Notre Dame). As with Vietnam, the Salvadoran army is estimated to need a ten to one advantage in personnel to win this war. In lieu of this, as in Vietnam, Washington has stepped up, behind the back of Congress, the air war in El Salvador, (Translated to English: "Our Savior. With an American accent "Our Savior, Crucified").

And so, dear church, where are you? In answer I turn to my most personal epiphany of despair. Last week a speaker, sponsored by the Catholic Peace Fellowship, was given time and room to speak to a small crowd at the Cancery. I don't mean to slight the CFP, but this may come off that way. The speaker had only been in El Salvador for one week, hardly enough time

to be able to master the situation and thus answer the myriad of questions she was confronted with. What struck me, however, was this: El Salvador has been front page news for six years now, yet the questions asked were so extremely naive. "Is it really a Communist based revolution? Does Duarte know that the death squads are still functioning?" Dear church, how is it that you have not informed your people that Catholics just south of the border are being indiscriminately killed. To carry a Bible in that overwhelmingly Catholic country is to be considered a communist/subversive. Lay Catechists have been that pointed victims of an El Salvadoran campaign of terror, torture and murder. The popular slogan among government forces is, "Be a patriot, kill a priest."

As if this total lack of knowledge (concern) on the part of the Church were not enough, the death blow of the Chancery talk was yet to come. On the wall of the room adjacent to the speaker was a well painted sign which read: Stop the U.S. war in El Salvador." What struck me was how temporary a structure it was-taped up-taken down, I'm sure, immediately after the presentation. A more permanent structure in the room, hidden discreetly, and for the duration of the meeting, behind a huge plant, was a picture of the rooms donor-dressed in full U.S. military garb. Oh Church, you whore!

Finally, the entire tenor of this small gathering was disturbing. Here was a chic gathering of the "politically aware," and they were playing a board-game-fantasy thrills and sorrows, paper money. Never were flesh and blood put on the line. One stern gent was preparing a legal case to halt the deportment of some El Salvadoran refugees. The attitude was pompous, the gesture petty. Another fellow was working for some Senator up on the hill-a democrat, of course. In parallel developments elsewhere, the bishops of the United States have recently issued prophetic pastorals on peace and economics. Paper money, paper pastorals-either way a board game.

So I contend with those who hold up hope as a Christian virtue, or, worse yet, as a matter of orthodoxy, why hope when it is only to kid yourself. I look instead to the despairing Jesus, weeping over the city of Jerusalem ("If only you had known the way that leads to peace" Lk. 19:42). This is by no means a proscription for inaction. Love needs not hope, just truth. So Jesus dries his eyes and enters the temple and does a little cleaning up (Lk. 19:45-46). To love and so truth seem to be the necessary thing. Hope is neither here nor there. Jesus continues, grudgingly, yet steadily on to Golgotha, where to say, "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken me?"

Admittedly Jesus' final words are taken from the twenty-second Psalm. This is a paradoxical



piece, for while it ends in joyful praise, so salvific act separates the beleaguered psalmist from his/her fate. So let's not force a hopeful interpretation upon the Biblical word. Rather, as seems entirely possible, might not the psalmist's message be that joy is consequent upon love? That love is self-fulfilling-hope being neither here nor there? I think so.

So the truth of the matter is a bitter truth. When Jesus' first disciples realized this "many...withdrew and no longer went about with Him." Then Jesus asked the twelve, do you also want to leave me? Those who remain must assent to Peter's most negative affirmation of faith, "To whom shall we go?" (Jn. 6:66) In Jesus he had found the truth, brutal honesty-but nevertheless, the truth. (Again I hear murmurs of contention: "But what of the resurrection? Was this not a hopeful sign?" To which I reply, "It might have been, but what has become of it-colored eggs and chocolate candy."



Mary Mullins



# Introspection

by Kari Fisher

Jan. 21, 1986

On Jan. 6, 1986 Kari Fisher, a member of our community climbed over a fence at Offutt Air Force Base to protest the arms race. Kari did not cooperate with SAC headquarters, nor did she use a lawyer at her trial. Kari was given a 6 month sentence, all of which 15 days was suspended. Kari served 11 of the 15 days. Kari has also been given a one-year probation which she is not cooperating with. The probation means that she will not return to SAC for one year and this is why she is not cooperating.

Following are excerpts from her statement that she sent to friends, also following are notes, statements and comments about jail that she has written since being released.

Dear friends,

Since May 1, I have been at the D.M.C.W. During this relatively short time I have been part of what I feel is a supportive life situation. Yet, as a woman I met put it, "There comes a time after catching people downstream, when one must wade upstream to see what is the cause of the problem."

I cannot think of a more perfect day, than Epiphany, the day the Magi gave gifts to the Christ child to begin wading upstream.

On that day, I will take the communion sacraments, that have been shared with our community to the SAC base. Not only will this be a symbolic gift to the people we attempt to serve and love at our hospitality house; but, it will also be symbolic of them. Symbolic of how the military deprives people of the bare essentials. Symbolic of how their bodies are being broken and their blood is being spilt daily merely because of the choices that we make.

If we had lived during the time and place of Herod, we would have seen the baby males killed-we would have had a choice to resist. If we had lived during Nazi Germany, we would have seen the ovens being built-we would have had a chance to resist. Yet, we do little or nothing in our society to resist. The choice to face the truth, especially as the Magi did, should be clear to us now.

Tonight a woman who is from Witness for Peace came to the house. It was pretty horrible to see the victims of "our" war down there. (Nicaragua) I thought about Central America alot when I was in jail. (Douglas Co. affectionately nicknamed the Ramada Inn of the penal system.) I thought about how the daily struggle to live would be incredible. About how the daily struggle to be a good just person would be far worse than any penal system in America.

I thought about folks like Helen Woodson, serving 12 years, (and the Pruning Hooks Silo Disarming Action), and Rich Miller (4 Yrs.) and fifteen days didn't seem very bad at all.

I also thought a lot about the whole prison system. For the majority of my time at the Ramada, there was only one other white woman. Our country's racism became more apparent.

I guess I went in expecting to see a bunch of 30ish looking women, who smoked a lot, wore heavy eye-shadow, tainted young inmates, polished long fingernails, and were real tough.

Instead, I found out alot of things. First, no make-up or nail polish in jail. The only 30ish woman was a 33 year old grandmother I met. She talked matter-of-factly about "whoahin'" to make \$50. She asked me what I was in for. When I said protesting (I was, honestly, tempted to say, stealing a car.) She and I talked. I explained that the bottom line to me was that I thought it was wrong to spend more than half of our national budget on the military, which would only lead to all of our deaths, when there were people forced to eat at soup kitchens, or to go without. The highlight of my "vacation" came when she said, "I thought you was crazy, but I'm ready to go sit on a line myself."

Far from being tainted, I was pretty much respected. (kind of like the CW house here feels, "She's okay, a little crazy, but pkay.") I don't know if respected is the right word, though.

Judith, Carmen and I were talking about this last night. Jail was probably the best lesson in feminism, love and community that I've ever had.

Here I was with the feminism of poverty and probably the worst victims of it. Only 3 or 4 of the 18 women on my module didn't have kids. There was, at one point, 4 pregnant women on our mod. One woman was in for two months for hitting a white woman. Another, had a , three hundred dollar fine paid off \$25 a day for every day this woman stayed in jail. This same woman had been in jail since October, her trial is in April.



The feminism part is also evidenced by just having 18+ women in a confined area, without any men, 24 hours a day. There was no community meetings, no rules, no conscience raising experience (formally that is) but there was such a bond, such love. Pregnant women were always offered the first of any stuff a lot of them did want, like milk). People would slip notes under the door to the women in lock-down.  
Jan. 27, 1986

I can't think straight. It's too noisy. There's so much I want to write about here and jail. We have 9 little kids. Supper is going to be challenging. I think I'll make macaroni and tomatoes and rice and lentils. I'm not sure in what order it will be.

It seems really crazy that we don't think twice about putting folks in jail. Taking away their freedom, messing them up more. All of that takes money, but it seems like there are a lot better ways to get people the money rather than locking them up, taking away their kids and THEN putting them in rehabilitational programs.  
Feb. 10, 1986

I think a lot of folks who read this are going to think that maybe I'm too soft. But the thing is that all of the women in my mod were there for economic reasons. All but one woman ( who hit the white woman-I guess you can draw your own conclusion about the Golden Rule) were there because of money. Forgery, heroin addiction, burglary, larceny, and shop-lifting were crimes that people were put away for.

It also made me re-evaluate my own trial.

Magistrate Richard Peck was concerned, perhaps patronizing would be a better choice of words. His concern was of putting a 20-year-old "girl" away. His offers of probation were turned down by me. (Well, sort of, I just said that if he gave me probation I would go back immediately to SAC. I felt that for me, it would underestimate my commitment to the arms race. The arms race doesn't go away when we go home to eat pizza....)



# Son Spots

Well, it's time, again, to write an article for Via Pacis. I've typed all the rest of the articles, (now you know who to blame for errors), it's time for lay-out, and I haven't, until now, even thought about beginning an article.

It seems fairly consistent for this issue to just reflect on a few thoughts, a few words spoken by others that effect us.

The first item that worth reflection for me was part of a homily given by a priest at the Reconciliation, or communal penance service at Visitation Parish. I don't remember the name of the priest. He talked about babies, about how when they're born, they're so precious. No matter what they do, we love them. They can throw up on us, defecate, scream or hit us, and we still love them. Those "bad" things don't matter. The priest then said, that we must begin to see the preciousness of the baby that is still in each adult. We need to appreciate each person as if they were the baby they grew from.

There was more in the homily, but that was what struck me. I began to realize how intolerant I am of people different from myself. I began to see how I want things done my way, and I don't always appreciate someone else's opinion or actions because they differ from mine. So, because of this one homily I begin to grow in new aspects of my Christian walk.

The second item of reflection came from a line that my pastor gave in a sermon. (As you can tell I go to church alot). He emphasized in a new way a thought that I had had before. He put it simply, "The sin of the world is the sin of your heart." At first I was in disagreement, but that "little voice" inside of me said, "You better think about that." So I did. I thought about the actions in the world that I consider sin-exploitation, murder, lying, cheating, adultery, greed etc.

As I reflected on each of these sins I realized that they were in my heart. Each one, in its' own way, was there. Obviously there were many prayers said for forgiveness.

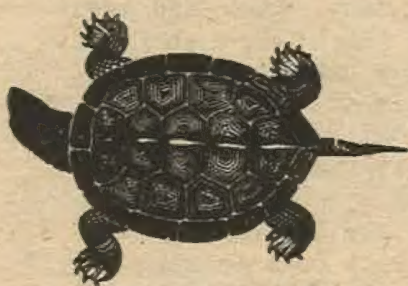
Now I often pray that God will show me the sin of my heart. I pray that He can soften my heart, make it pliable and make me willing to be vulnerable. I will warn you that if you do this there will be pain. Pain of knowing sin and hurt from becoming vulnerable. You'll have times of being able to reach out and other times that you'll just want to pull back. It's all okay, because life is growth, and there's no growth without pain.

Another thought that occurs to me is how sad God must be when He looks at how we treat each other. lately community life hasn't been easy, and we're all human-as my pastor says, "We all have clay feet." When we see how terribly we treat each other one-on-one, it's no wonder that nations treat each other badly. In fact, it's a miracle that we haven't destroyed the world by now. Not that we haven't tried. Thank God that He's in control.

I would also like to include a personal thank-you to my friends and the people at my church for all their moral support.

So ends another article for the Via Pacis-God Bless-remember to treat others as you would want to be treated. Also remember that we are all fearfully and wonderfully made.

by Cindy Blake



## In Memory of a Friend

Dr. John Rawland was a good supporter to the Catholic Worker. He was also a good friend to me. Each summer, for the last few years, John used to take me to the Iowa State Fair. It was always a good treat to me because it's always hard for me to get away from the Catholic Worker. Last summer I missed a chance of going to the State Fair with John. But I recall the last trip we took to the fair which I would like to share with you.

John and I spent most of the day walking around and exploring things. We would spend time looking at the livestock then we went to most of the exhibits and shows. We watched a man make rope by spinning strands of string together. At another exhibit John got into doing some Arc welding. We spent alot of time there. I watched him do alot of welding. At that time I never understood what he was trying to tell me, but now as I look back and realizing what kind of doctor he was, I think I understand.



He was telling me that welding is somewhat like repairing torn skin, like sometimes there would be a scar where the skin was repaired. With welding, you're putting two pieces of metal together and the weld becomes the scar. He said that scars are like bad things we do in life which can be healed with love.

I learned alot from John. I found him to be a smart person because he talked about things I never knew.

He loved life and at the fair I found that he loved being young because we went on a couple of wild rides. One of the rides I found myself scared, so scared that for most of the ride I closed my eyes. After that he comforted me by telling me a story.

We had a short picnic on the tail gate of his car. It was good because we talked alot about the Catholic Worker and staff, me and my dreams, about all the stuff we gathered up from alot of exhibits.

Then John took me back to the Catholic Worker.

To me John was more than a friend. To me and to others he was more than just a doctor, he was a man, which we will all miss.

by Norman Searah





con't from pg-1

One question most people have is how is the rest of the bill going to get paid. At this point, there are two possible answers. One answer is to use the refund the State of Iowa received from the Exxon overcharge. Some legislators and others would rather see this money used for weatherization which is also a noble cause. The other answer is to pass the incurred on to other consumers. Many people are against the plan for this very reason. But according to a study done in Ohio the increase passed on to other consumers was only twelve cents per month. This amount included all debts incurred by the utility company, not only those incurred under this program. Twelve cents a month is a small amount to pay to help others stay warm.

I encourage all of our readers to write their state senators and representatives and ask them to support the 12% Affordable Budget Plan. I also encourage people to write the Iowa Commerce Commission at the Lucas State Office Building, Fifth Floor, Des Moines, Iowa (50319). The Commerce Commission will interpret the law to determine how it will be carried out by the utility companies.

For more information contact:  
C.A.B.E.L.  
c/o Dubuque C.C.I.  
1584 White Street  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001  
(319) 582-2740

or  
Des Moines C.C.I.  
1609 7th Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50314  
(515) 282-9412

\*Quotes in this article were taken from Mid-America in Crisis: Homelessness in Des Moines, by the National Coalition for the Homeless



con't from pg-8

But how many judges and magistrates think twice about putting away other 20-year-old "bad" girls? Especially is they are black? Or American Indians? Or inarticulate?

My courtroom was filled with friends and supporters; yet when I went to a hearing for my roommate CeCe there was only her father.

I remember the night I was sentenced one of the women said to me, "If I would have had a nun there, the judge would have let me go."

The middle class version of jail is so different than what our poor brothers and sisters experience. They go in with a public defender and will often not have the money for bond. We go in with a choice of lawyers and are offered personal recognition. They go into a hostile courtroom with some family and friends. We go into the courtroom that doesn't want to punish a "peer" that is full of friends and family and supporters. They go in often unaware of their rights and procedures. We go in knowing our "crime" prepared to take the consequences, well aware of our rights and what is going to happen. They go into jail without support communities and virtually forgotten. We receive letters, are visited regularly and are commended for our "crime". They leave jail to return home to their lives, life goes on as usual, they are often unable to articulate thier post prison blues. We leave jail, to our friends who will continue to support us as we attempt to articulate our post-prison blues

This ends the thoughts that Kari has shared with us.  
D.M.C.W.

Thank-you

by Norman Seorah

I just got done passing out socks to most of the men that eat at Kindred house.

Even though Christmas was celebrated a while ago, I find myself still passing out Christmas gifts and things to people. As I pass out gifts I try to see if there's more that I could do for them.

This last Christmas wouldn't have been much of a Christmas for alot of people that live on the streets and for a few families that are struggling to survive.

This last Christmas was hard for me to get around to pass out gifts to the family shelter, Kindred men's shelter and Kindred soup kitchen. With the help of a couple fo friends we got most of the gifts passed out.

I couldn't find anyone down at the railroad tracks.

I would like to thank the person that donated money to help get Sheryl a gift. I also sent her children some gifts.

I would like to thank some people for donating a statue of St. Francis which is standing near the statue of Mary and Baby Jesus, along with some Christmas gifts to pass out.

Thank you, and to all the people that helped out-thank-you.





# Ending the Tests

by Sam Day

Following are excerpts from  
and article entitled Ending The  
Tests written by Sam Day.

...At midnight on Dec. 31, the deadline will pass on the most significant unilateral offer yet made in the nuclear arms race—a proposal that was backed by deeds. It came from the Russians.

Five months ago, in late July, Gorbachev unilaterally suspended the Soviet Union's nuclear weapons testing program for the balance of the year and offered to keep it shut as long as the United States would do the same. He gave the U.S. until Jan. 1, 1986 to complete its current test series and then, together with the Soviet Union, call it quits.

It was a move of great significance because of the critical importance of field testing—the experimental detonation of weapons—to the growth and development of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. If anything can be said to be the heartbeat of the nuclear arms race, it is nuclear testing.

Testing is important because it permits what the nuclear weapons establishment likes to call the "modernization" of weapons—the improvement of their performance characteristics. It's a vital link in the process of making nuclear weapons more accurate, more deliverable, more versatile, more usable. ....Without testing, nuclear weapons production could still continue. But the nuclear arms race as we have come to know it—the competition for qualitative advantage—would be seriously curtailed. Designing and developing nuclear weapons would not be much more lively or attractive than the business of furnishing the armed services with trucks or high-explosive shells.

That is why no nuclear arms control measure has been more aggressively resisted by the U.S. nuclear weapons establishment—by the three major nuclear weapons laboratories—than the idea of halting nuclear weapons testing...

...Ever alert about threats to the heartbeat of the nuclear weapons program, the labs and their political allies in the Reagan administration were ready when Gorbachev unveiled his new proposal last July. A propaganda barrage, orchestrated through the White House, succeeded in smearing the Soviet offer as devious and duplicitous.



Wounded and the outset, then shouldered out of the way by flashier media issues such as Star Wars and the Geneva summit meeting, the continuing self-imposed Soviet moratorium has largely sunk from public view despite the efforts of major peace groups—the Nuclear Weapons Freeze, among them—to give it wider attention.

Now with the deadline fast approaching (past) and the Soviets unlikely to extend it long in the face of continued U.S. testing, hopes for a reprieve from nuclear Armageddon are also sinking from sight.

Our failure as a nation to seize the opportunity will have dealt a grievous blow to humanity's hopes for peace.  
Sam Day.

Via Pacis wishes to to encourage readers to write to the Soviet embassy expressing their support for the ban. We realize it is late, but they need to know that there are Americans in solidarity with the testing ban. Write either:

Soviet Embassy  
Military and Naval Attache  
2552 Belmont Rd. NW  
Washington DC 20008 or

Soviet Embassy  
information  
1706 18th St. NW  
Wash. DC 20009



# Reflections from a Volunteer

One evening in the late fall we stopped by a local restaurant. After a conversation with a charming young waitress, Kari Fisher, I began to inquire about this Catholic Worker House.

I was introduced to the Catholic Worker House by a fine gentleman who works with a supportive group. He introduced me to Jim Harrington one Wednesday. I told Jim, more affectionately known as "Sir", that on Wednesday's I could give of my time and energies for the day.

I have lived in a "lily-white" world of middle class people all my life. Because of this, the next few Wednesdays were a new and different outlook on the world of the poor and homeless.

I remember the first time I brought groceries, thinking how they would be parcelled out to the families who needed them the most. Not so. I was told to just leave them out on the shelf in the yard, that way people could pick and choose. It amazed me that no one coveted this stuff. I really wanted them to dole it out.

The next eye-opener was the 15 minutes after the bread and rolls came. Again, no control, but it works.

I have seen women and children who have no where else to stay come to the Catholic Worker House for a couple of weeks. A family out of gas and a broken auto, mother and son thrown out of their apartment, a teenage girl kicked out of her home and others.

The amount of money and food and clothes that continually flow through the front door is overwhelming. These are the thoughts of the "New kid on the Block."

by Jim Madison



Faith does not insulate us from the daily challenges of life, but intensifies our desire to address them precisely in light of the gospel which has come to us in the person of the risen Christ.

second draft of the Bishops Peace Pastoral

Via Pacis

DMCW--/Diocese of Des Moines  
Box 4551--Box 1816  
Des Moines, IA 50306  
515-243-0765

Non-Profit organisation

U.S. Postage

PAID

Permit 22

Des Moines, Iowa

Address Correction requested

Readers - Please send change of address before the Post Office does and save us 25¢.

Marquette Univ/Memorial Librar  
C.W. Archives  
1415 W. Wisconsin Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53233